

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 14840 101131Z

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ACTION NEA-07

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 14840

LIMDIS

THE FOLG TELE RECD AS CALCUTTA 2658 NOV 7 RPTD FOR
YOUR INFO. QUOTE.

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PFOR, IN, BG

SUBJ: COMMENTS BY SENIOR OFFICIALS ON BANGLADESH EVENTS

1. I SAW CHIEF SECRETARY GUPTA AND GENERAL JACOB AT THE SOVIET RECEPTION THIS EVENING NOVEMBER 7 AND DISCUSSED BANGLADESH WITH BOTH BRIEFLY. GUPTA DESCRIBED BANGLADESH SITUATION AS WORRISOME, SAID FIGHTING IS STILL GOING ON THERE AND SAID THAT ANI-INDIAN SLOGANS HAD BEEN SHOUTED IN DACCA (CPM LEADER JOTI BASU LATER TOLD ME HE HAD HEARD THAT THE INDIAN AIRLINES OFFICE IN DACCA HAD BEEN SACKED). HOWEVER, GUPTA SAID, WEST BENGAL-BANGLADESH BORDER IS QUIET AND SO FAR THERE HAVE BEEN NO REFUGEES. IN CONVERSATION LATER WITH CONSOFF O'NEILL, GUPTA TOOK A SOMEWHAT MORE RELAXED VIEW OF THE SITUATION IN BANGLADESH, DESCRIBING IT AS "NOT OUR AFFAIR."

2. GENERAL JACOB SPENT AT LEAST AN HOUR AT THE SOVIET RECEPTION, WAS EVIDENTLY IN HIGH SPIRITS AND WAS OBVIOUSLY ENJOYING THE HOSTS' VODKA. HE COMMENTED BRIEFLY TO ME THAT THE SITUATION WAS
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 14840 101131Z

"VERY BAD" IN BANGLADESH. GENERAL RAHMAN WOULD NOT LAST VERY

LONG, JACOB SAID, AND "THEY WILL ALL KILL EACH OTHER OFF." I ASKED IF THE FIGHTING HAD ENDED AND JACOB SAID NO, IT IS CONTINUING; JACOB SAID HE KNEW THIS FROM MONITORING OF THE BANGLADESH ARMY INTERNAL NET. I ASKED WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO AND HE REPLIED, WITH A SMILE, "NOTHING, I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT BANGLADESH." JACOB SAID THAT AS HE HAD TOLD ME IN EARLIER CONVERSATIONS HIS TROOP DISPOSITIONS WERE ALL AGAINST THE CHINESE.

3. O'NEILL SPOKE WITH A SENIOR AIR FORCE AND A NAVAL OFFICER AND FOUND BOTH RELAXED AND UNCONCERNED. A SENIOR POLICE OFFICER TOLD HIM THAT THE WEST BENGAL-BANGLADESH LAND BORDER REMAINS OPEN.

4. BANGLADESH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER TOLD O'NEILL THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT "OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE" IN BANGLADESH EVENTS BECAUSE, HE SAID, THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP IN DACCA IS VERY REASONABLE AND INTELLIGENT. HOWEVER HIS DEPUTY, IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH ME, WAS QUITE WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF INDIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION.

KORN
UNQUOTE.
SAXBE

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